# Northern Ireland Policing Board: Confidence in Policing Research'The key drivers of public confidence in NI'

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### 'The key drivers of public confidence in NI'

**Dr Jonny Byrne** (University of Ulster)
**Dr John Topping** (University of Ulster)
**Mr Richard Martin** (Oxford University)

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# 1.0 Introduction

In January 2014, the Northern Ireland Policing Board (NIPB) commissioned the University of Ulster to conduct research into public confidence in policing to help inform the work of the Board and its oversight of police service delivery. More specifically, the research team were tasked with exploring 'the key drivers of confidence in Northern Ireland'. To date, the subject of 'confidence in policing' within a Northern Ireland context has been relatively under researched, both in academic and policy terms. Thus, the present research is the first empirical research to be produced in the country to empirically assess confidence in policing from a cross section of society – including the key dynamics and drivers that underpin police confidence at a community level.

The report begins with a comprehensive review of academic literature, policy documents and contemporary events related to confidence in policing. The research then provides an overview of the methodology used to undertake the research, with the remainder of the report comprised of the findings from the survey. The report concludes with an overview of the central findings along with a series of recommendations.

## 2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

Within modern liberal democracies, the concept of confidence in the police may be viewed as a key tenet of the Peelian bedrock upon which Western policing is based – especially in terms of police organisations operationalising values and practices which reduce the nexus with the public. So too public confidence may be observed as vital if police are to perform their role effectively, efficiently and in a manner which is deemed 'just' (Jackson *et al*., 2012). On a general level, the instrumental importance of public confidence in policing is becoming increasingly well understood, with contemporary police scholarship evidencing that higher levels of confidence in the police are linked to greater public co-operation, deference and even compliance with the law (Tyler, 1990; Sunshine & Tyler, 2003a, Tyler & Huo, 2002; Bradford, 2011; Jackson *et al*., 2012). Indeed, the concept of confidence has attracted considerable attention amongst academics and practitioners, with extensive (mainly quantitative) studies detailing the drivers, or determinants, of trust and confidence. Originating from the USA, there has been a particular acceleration of research in Britain where a focus on public confidence has arisen out of the New Public Management era, as well as broader concern about falling rates of public confidence in the police in recent decades (Neyroud, 2009; Bradford *et al*., 2009a).

However, in spite of the significant policing 'attention' enjoyed by Northern Ireland at local and international levels, there have been limited efforts to draw upon this extensive field to inform policing as delivered by the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI). As suggested by Topping (2012) "we have no real research or institutional grasp of what confidence really means to communities…[as a] whole area of policing and criminology relevant to the debate which has yet to be discussed or seriously understood". The paucity of such work may be observed as somewhat of a paradox insofar as confidence, legitimacy and trust the police have been (and remain) central to the very nature of the conflict (O'Rawe, 2003; Mulcahy, 2006). Similarly, with the development of confidence in policing arguably at the core of the Independent Commission on Policing (ICP), its specific mandate to ensure that Northern Ireland enjoys widespread support from, and is seen as an integral part of, the community as a whole, has yet to be tested empirically (ICP, 1999).

Drawing on contemporary academic research, the review of literature is developed across five sections. The first offers a brief explanation of that which defines confidence in policing; the second outlines how official surveys and academic research currently 'measure' confidence in the police; the third section considers current levels of confidence in the PSNI, with particular comparison to England and Wales and Ireland; the fourth section focuses the key drivers, or determinants, of confidence in policing and applies these to the Northern Irish context; and the final section considers political dynamics related to confidence in the police set within the Northern Irish context.

## 2.1 What is 'confidence' in policing?

Reflecting on the topic of 'public confidence' in the police, Fleming and McLaughlin (2010: 201) note that:

> "is a classic 'wicked issue'- a complicated and demanding concept to get to grips with, not least because it is premised upon other tricky psychological concepts, namely perceptions, sentiments, opinions, expectations, judgments, satisfaction, trust and legitimacy".

Related to this, particular effort has been made to distinguish 'confidence' *per se* from notions of 'trust' and 'legitimacy'. Thus, the review of literature will begin by exploring such distinctions – and what this means for an understanding of the relationship between the police and the public (Bradford and Jackson, 2011; Bradford & Myhill, 2014).

In their authoritative review of the trust and confidence literature in Britain, Bradford *et al*. (2008:2) define confidence as "a 'system-level institutionally-based attitude towards the activities of the criminal justice system. It is, we propose, something closer to a job-rating of the police and other agents of criminal justice". Police confidence may therefore be imagined as centring on *beliefs* or *attitudes*, which themselves are based on basic social understandings and assumptions, focused on the police as an *institution* (Bradford *et al*., 2008).

Distinguishing between confidence and *trust* in the police, Bradford *et al.* (2008) and Bradford & Jackson (2011) note that trust is deeply rooted in our lives and experiential relationships with others, involving our expectations of how others will behave along with the predictability of police actions. In terms of more operational policing matters, this suggests that public trust in the police is born out of dynamics related to encounters with the police, "where the individual is an actor, where they are actively involved in interactions with authorities and can make their own assessments of, for example the fairness of police officer's behaviour" (Bradford *et al*., 2008:2).

The motives of the police are thought to be of particular importance in the context of the trust relationship between with the public, centred around the estimates of character and affect; and whether the police have the best interests of the public at heart (Bradford *et al*., 2008; Tyler & Huo, 2002). However, conceptions of trust which rely purely on face-to-face interactions belie the complexity of the public relationships with the police – especially when relatively few people are regularly placed in a situation to make such judgments about individual officers, yet still make the 'leap of faith' to trust the police (Bradford & Jackson, 2009). In this regard, trust will "always be complemented by, and formed in light of, assessments of other aspects of police behaviour…", including fairness, effectiveness, shared values and a commitment to the local community (Bradford *et al*., 2008).

In turn, such contentions would indicate that trust is mainly about the relationship which exists between a member of the public and individual officers. But confidence in the police is additionally based upon a *broader* and more remote assessment of the process and activities of the police (Bradford *et al*., 2008). Whilst this distinction has been made in the literature, there is of course the danger of over-conceptualizing what is really happening 'on the ground' when the public make assessments of the police – whether derived from first-hand encounters or popular media. And while trust and confidence are then, separate concepts, "overall confidence in the police is a product of judgments made about its trustworthiness" (Jackson & Bradford, 2010:248).

In terms of distinguishing confidence from *legitimacy* as a property possessed by the police, when citizens feel that the police are right, proper and just, they may then feel that the police should be deferred to voluntarily (Tyler, 2006). This empirical understanding then allows us to see the legitimacy of the police as a social fact expressed in the actions and motivations of individuals – which in turn is capable of being observed and recorded by researchers (Bradford & Jackson, 2011).

Central to legitimacy is the psychological perspective which captures a normative dimension to a member of the public's behaviour: i.e. the motivation for them to act whereby compliance is based on a positive and intentional belief about the 'right' of the police to do their job (Tyler and Jackson, 2013). Legitimacy, then, is "typically framed as a value that leads the person holding it to feel a responsibility and obligation to defer to the law and the decisions of legal authorities" (Tyler & Jackson, 2013:88). In practical terms, this can be seen in the specific acts of deference, compliance or cooperation from members of the public, which can include simply calling the police when a crime has occurred; or assisting police with their inquiries (Bradford & Jackson, 2011).

In summary, then, *trust* is primarily, but not exclusively, about the relationship that exists between members of the public and individual officers, confidence, however, is the public's perception of the police based on a broader and more remote assessment of the process and activities of the police (Bradford et al, 2008: 2). Compared with *legitimacy*, confidence in policing is perhaps less closely linked to the justification of police power and authority, which is suited in a deeper psychological process, but, along with trust in the police, continues to tap into the themes of legitimacy, such as the moral alignment with the police and a willingness to obey and cooperate with police officers (Tyler and Fagan, 2008; Jackson and Bradford, 2010).

### 2.2 How is confidence in policing measured?

In recent years, there have been significant shifts across the UK to measure police performance in terms of public confidence and satisfaction, rather than solely performance metrics relating to crime and detection (Neyroud, 2009: 305). At least for Northern Ireland, there are two official surveys that measure confidence in policing, outlined below. These have been complimented, albeit to a limited extent,

by mainly qualitative academic research as a means of providing some additional understanding of issues related to confidence in policing.

The first of the 'official' measures is the Department of Justice's (DoJ) survey *Perceptions of Policing, Justice and Anti-Social Behaviour*. Drawing upon data from the Northern Ireland Crime Survey, it is a representative, personal interview survey centred on perceptions of crime with approximately 4,000 adults living in private households across the country (DoJNI, 2014). There are three strands of confidence measure related to policing which the survey attempts to capture:

1. *Confidence in the police and police accountability arrangements*
   An overall (composite) level of confidence in the police is derived from responses to seven individual indicators. It is worth noting that this is an overall confidence rating that combines confidence in policing with confidence in police accountability arrangements. These indicators are replicated below:

   'Police provide an ordinary day-to-day service for all the people of NI'
   'Police do a very or fairly good job in NI as a whole'
   'Police treat Catholics and Protestants equally in NI as a whole'
   'Policing Board (NIPB) is independent of police'
   'Policing Board (NIPB) helps ensure police do a good job'
   'Police Ombudsman (OPONI) is independent of police'
   'Police Ombudsman (OPONI) helps ensure police do a good job'

   Source: DOJ, 2014

2. *Confidence in the local police*
   The survey also measures the level of public confidence in the local police, again producing an overall level of confidence based on multiple indicators. Respondents were asked to what extent they agree or disagree with six statements concerning the local police, seen below:

   'Can be relied on to be there when you need them'
   'Would treat you with respect if you had contact with them'
   'Treat everyone fairly regardless of who they are'
   'Can be relied on to deal with minor crimes'
   'Understand the issues that affect this community'
   'Are dealing with the things that matter to this community'

   Source: DOJ, 2014

3. *Confidence in police engagement with other agencies*
   A set of questions that seek to measure levels of public confidence in the local police working in partnership with other agencies (including district councils), to address local anti-social behaviour and crime issues. Similarly an overall confidence level is measured, this time asking whether respondents agree the two statements below:

‘Seek people’s views about the ASB and crime issues that matter in the local area’
‘Are dealing with the ASB and crime issues that matter in the local area’

Source: DOJ, 2014

The second official survey of confidence in the police is that derived from the Northern Ireland Policing Board’s (NIPB) *Public Perceptions of the Police, PCSPs and the Northern Ireland Policing Board*. The NIPB draws on the Northern Ireland Omnibus Survey results to assess the level of public satisfaction with the performance of the PSNI, Policing and Community Safety Partnerships and the NIPB (NIPB, 2013). The Omnibus Survey consists of a random sample of 1,154 people aged 16 or over drawn from private addresses. The survey measures confidence in policing by asking ten questions, with answers offered on Likert scales. The questions are as follows:

Q1. ‘How do you rate the job the PSNI do in your area?’
Q2. ‘Do you think that the PSNI does a good job or a poor job in Northern Ireland as a whole?’
Q3. ‘How satisfied are you that the PSNI treat members of the public fairly in Northern Ireland as a whole?’
Q4. ‘How much confidence do you have in the PSNI’s ability to provide an ordinary day-to-day service for all the people of Northern Ireland?’
Q5. ‘How satisfied are you with the levels of police patrols in your area?’
Q6. ‘Over the last year, has the overall standard of policing in your area…?’
Q7. ‘Do you know the names of or recognize the police officers policing your local area’
Q8. ‘Have you been in contact with the PSNI over the past 12 months?’
Q9. ‘How satisfied were you with the PSNI during this contact?’
Q10. ‘How safe do you feel in your local community?’

Source: NIPB, 2013

And beyond what Myhill *et al*. (2011) argue are crude ‘single indicator’ measures of police confidence (e.g. how ‘good job’ are the police doing) which do not aggregate the necessary variety of instrumental (e.g. effectiveness) and normative assessments (e.g. fairness or shared values) of the police, it is worth noting the multiplicity of the questions covered through official surveys in Northern Ireland in building an overall ‘picture’ of confidence levels. Though Topping (2012) offers a variety of critiques at veracity of confidence levels in the PSNI portrayed through such surveys – particular noting the challenges facing the NIPB in achieving an accurate picture of public confidence which takes into consideration the various community nuances that exist around policing and justice.

At least for England and Wales, the main tool for measuring public perceptions of the police is the Crime Survey of England and Wales (CSEW). Here, a single-indicator question to measure confidence in the effectiveness of the police in tackling crime and anti-social behaviour was introduced, measuring the ‘percentage of people who agree

that the police and local councils are dealing with the anti-social behavior and crime issues that matter in their area' (Jackson & Bradford, 2010: 241). The CSEW also contains six further measures of confidence in the police concerning: police reliability; respectfulness; fairness; reliability regarding minor crimes; ability to deal with local concerns; and confidence in local police (CSEW, 2014).

And in the Republic of Ireland, up until 2008 (the last report available on the An Garda Síochánawebsite) the Garda have carried out ten large-scale public attitudinal surveys, involving samples of up to 10,000 respondents (An Garda Síochána, 2008). Public confidence in the Garda was measured through questions concerning: satisfaction with overall Garda service to the community; satisfaction with overall contact with the Garda; the approachability of the Garda; how good a job the Garda do in the locality; perceptions of Garda policing priorities; confidence that anyone in Garda custody would have their rights fully respected; that the Garda would help if a persons' rights were infringed; and that the Garda would carry their role in a fair and impartial manner (Garda, 2008).

However, it must be noted that aside from the two official surveys related to policing in Northern Ireland (as noted above), additional quantitative and qualitative academic research exists in terms of capturing confidence in policing. Such research has tended to be intermittent, with the issue of confidence often part of ancillary findings from the research (Byrne & Monaghan, 2008; Topping, 2008a; 2008b; Topping & Byrne, 2012). The only quantitative research based upon focused survey data assessing the determinants of public confidence in the PSNI is the recent work of Ellison *et al.* (2012a). The aim of this particular research was to:

> "assess the factors that drive perceptions of the police in a working-class, inner-city community in Northern Ireland [New Lodge] in the context of the developing peace process and ongoing concerns about growing levels of crime and disorder" (Ellison *et al.*, 2012a:3).

The study constructed a measure of confidence that was informed by the instrumental and expressive dimensions of public confidence in the police (Jackson and Sunshine, 2007). The instrumental measure was based around questions sought to assess "the importance of risk-based assessments about the perceived severity of the crime 'problem'". The expressive measure asked questions which tapped into whether "attitudes to crime and punishment are intertwined with moral evaluations of rule breaking and lay prognosis of social cohesion and moral order" (Ellison et al, 2012a). The findings of this survey are discussed in later sections.

Whilst there is yet to be any sustained or detailed qualitative research focusing primarily on the drivers of public confidence in the PSNI, Byrne and Monaghan's (2008) wide-ranging interview-based research, for example, offers an account of Republican and Loyalist community experiences of "the new dispensation of policing in this conflict society" (p.111). Similarly, Topping's (2008a; 2008b) research into the

realisation of Patten's vision of 'policing with the community' drew on interviews with Republican and Loyalist community representatives, revealing local perceptions about the delivery of policing in such areas, along with the extent of police/community engagement.

Qualitative research of McAlister *et al*. (2009) is particularly noteworthy for its data and commentary on young people's perceptions of the PSNI. It explored

> 'conditions and circumstances specific to Northern Ireland regarding the legacy of conflict and transition to a 'post-conflict' society' and its impact on the most marginalized and 'hard-to-reach' children and young people (McAlister *et al*., 2009:10).

The interviews extended across six communities, involving 196 children and young people aged between 8 and 25, including 26 adult community representatives. More recently, Topping and Byrne (2012) have carried out a qualitative study "of the relations between communities and Republican paramilitary organisations who seek to exploit a perceived dearth of state-based policing at the community level within Belfast" (p2). Again, this was not focused specifically upon measuring confidence in policing within these localities, but it necessarily taps into questions of these particular communities acceptance of, and support for, the PSNI.

**2.3 What are the levels of public confidence in policing?**

According to official surveys, public confidence in the PSNI has steadily increased since the organisation was formed in 2001 (Nolan, 2013:66). The DoJ have recorded an overall confidence rating in the PSNI and police accountability arrangements at 79.3 percent, remaining on par with the previous year's figure (80.3 percent) (DOJ, 2014). Further details of confidence in the PSNI are provided by the three police-specific indicators from the DoJ, whereby:

- 85 percent thought the police provide an ordinary day-to-day service for all the people in Northern Ireland;

- 72.7 percent thought the police do a very or fairly good job in Northern Ireland as a whole; and

- 78.6 percent believed that the police treat Catholics and Protestants equally in Northern Ireland as a whole (DOJ, 2014).

Similarly, the NIPB survey found that 70 percent of respondents thought that the PSNI do a very or fairly good job in Northern Ireland as a whole (with Protestant respondents at 76 percent and Catholic respondents 63 percent); and 73 percent of respondents were very or fairly satisfied that the PSNI treat members of the public

fairly in Northern Ireland as a whole (with Protestant respondents at 80 percent and Catholic respondents at 67 percent).

Although slightly dated, as a brief point of comparison, it is interesting to note that general confidence levels in the police (and local councils) in England and Wales for 2010-2011 was 52 percent; while 50 percent of respondents thought the police could be relied upon when needed; 85 percent thought the police would treat them with respect; and 67 percent thought the police would treat them fairly.

The Northern Ireland levels of public confidence do, however, fall when the focus of the questions shift from the PSNI at a Northern Ireland level to a local level associated with 'people's own area'. For example, the DoJ survey found that:

- 54 percent of respondents were confident that the local police could be relied on to be there when you need them;

- 66 percent had confidence that the local police treat everyone fairly regardless of who they are; and

- 53 percent were confident that the local police could be relied on to deal with minor crimes (DOJ, 2014).

The NIPB survey showed a similar reduction in levels of confidence at a local level. There was a 5 percent reduction in those rating the police as doing a very/fairly good job in their local area compared to a very/fairly good job in Northern Ireland as a whole; whilst 46 percent were very/fairly satisfied with the levels of police patrols in their area; and 26 percent were very/fairly dissatisfied (NIPB, 2013). This compares to an overall confidence level in local police of 72% in England and Wales (CSEW, 2014) and 82 percent for An Garda Siochana (Garda, 2008).

As argued by Ellison (2012a: 252), such surveys are useful in highlighting general trends in public confidence, but "rather less useful in highlighting police-community relations in specific neighbourhoods and among specific social groups". This is most acute in working-class Republican and Loyalist communities where legitimacy issues with PSNI remain (Topping & Byrne, 2012). As evidenced in this regard, Ellison *et al*. (2012a) in their survey of 280 New Lodge residents found that just 35.14 percent of respondents felt 'positive change' had occurred within policing, while only 51.99% percent said they would report a crime directly to the PSNI. And while such questions do not directly mirror those posed in the official surveys, such findings do offer more localised, community-specific perceptions of confidence in policing. This position has also been confirmed by McAlister *et al*. (2009:74). Insofar as the research – which consisted of 74 interviews across six of the most deprived and alienated communities of Northern Ireland found that those "interviewed across all communities were disillusioned with the police. Many felt that the police were

unwilling, unable or ill equipped to deal with an increase in crime and anti-social behaviour. Police tactics had failed to gain the trust of the communities"
Similarly, Jackson & Bradford (2010:4) have alluded to the fact that in England and Wales:

> "the emphasis in recent government policies on the 'law-abiding majority' may occlude the views of minority or marginalized groups who might have histories of problematic relationships with the police and/or be stigmatised as a criminal other. What might 'confidence' mean for these groups, and is the relationship between confidence and cooperation the same?"

This is not just a feature of confidence research in the UK, but across Europe research on trust and confidence has emphasised the perceptions of state institutions from a public perspective. This is in contrast to the USA, where the primary focus has been on the users of police and courts, in particular the relationship between legal authorities and inner city/minority citizens (Bradford & Jackson, 2009).

## 2.4 What are the key determinants of confidence in policing?

The last two decades have witnessed the concept of legitimacy, and the closely related question of confidence in policing, travel from the periphery to the core of policing discourse. As noted in the previous sections, determinants of police confidence and legitimacy are complex issues, which have begun to attract considerable attention, especially at an international level (Tankebe & Bottoms, 2013; Bradford & Myhill, 2014). Yet paradoxically, as noted above there has only been one dedicated piece of empirical research in Northern Ireland which has considered the key drivers of confidence in policing – itself confined to a Republic/Nationalist community (Ellison et al, 2012a). Given the confines of this review, the discussion, which follows, does not claim to be exhaustive, but instead hopes to identify and illustrate the key determinants of confidence in policing that emerge from the extensive literature and begin to consider their application to communities and policing in Northern Ireland.

### *2.4.1 Procedural fairness*

The research, which embodies the procedural justice model, is "regarded as the most important scholarship on legitimacy currently available" (Bottoms & Tankebe, 2012: 121). Its central thesis is that perceptions of legitimacy, and public confidence, are determined by people's justice-based judgments, the most influential of which is *the fairness of the procedures the police use to exercise their authority* as opposed to *outcome-based* concerns, such as effectiveness or fairness of distribution (Sunshine & Tyler, 2003a). In light of numerous studies, Tyler & Blader (2000) have consolidated the factors that shape individuals' perceptions of procedural fairness into a 'two-component model': quality of decision-making and quality of interpersonal treatment. This discussion is primarily focused on the latter, which concerns how the police treat

individuals during their daily interactions, and, for example, whether they demonstrate politeness and respect.

The Tylerian model of procedural justice, which has been confirmed by an impressive volume of studies in Britain and America (Bottoms & Tankebe, 2012), holds great promise for authorities seeking to gain or sustain legitimacy. In Oakland and Los Angeles, for example, research has evidenced that fairness during personal experiences with police can be five or six times as important as the nature of the outcome, suggesting that even when delivering negative outcomes, police officers could build legitimacy by acting in fair ways (Tyler & Huo, 2002; Tyler & Fagan, 2008). National and local surveys within the U.K. are also revealing the profound effect procedural justice can have on legitimacy (Bradford *et al*., 2009; Jackson & Bradford, 2010; Jackson *et al*., 2012). Findings from the quantitative research of Jackson *et al*., (2012) have evidenced that everyday contacts between police and public have the potential to catastrophically damage community trust, as well as eroding the legitimacy of the law and the right of legal authorities to command common support. Most recently in Australia, results from the first randomized field trial to test the impact of an experimental manipulation of procedural justice during police-citizen encounters has offered support for the importance of procedural fairness in police-public interactions (Mazerolle *et al*., 2013).

The overriding policy implication to be drawn is the importance of enhancing the everyday, often mundane, interactions and encounters police officers have with the community (Myhill & Bradford, 2012: 398; Skogan, 2006). Through their actions, expressions and general demeanour, it may be observed that officers can communicate "not only that they are acting fairly and properly but that those who they are dealing with are worthy of respect, consideration and police attention in a positive sense" (Bradford *et al*., 2009b:6). As noted by Tyler (2011:257):

> "every encounter that the public have with the police… should be treated as a socialising experience that builds or undermines legitimacy. Each contact is a 'teachable moment' in which people learn about the law and legal authorities."

This leads Tyler (2011) to argue that policing needs to be reconceptualised to concentrate on the *quality* of people's experiences, with officers being trained in order to ensure that encounters with the public build legitimacy. Such an investment has indeed been made by the PSNI as part of their latest strategy for fostering legitimacy in 'difficult communities':

> "We call these encounters 'moments of truth'. They're the moments when you [the public] see whether we are delivering on our commitments and judge us accordingly. There are more than half a million of these moments of truth in Northern Ireland every year." (PSNI, 2011a)

As reiterated by the Deputy Chief Constable:

> "Every routine encounter with the public is an opportunity to change people's minds about the PSNI, for better or worse, to build trust that takes relationships between the police and community to a new level" (Gillespie, 2013)

This has led senior officers to encourage those on patrol to 'take ownership' of their communities and interactions with the public, and to reflect on the idea that "when I am speaking to this member of the public, what I do here makes a lasting difference in terms of how they perceive the police" (CAJ, 2009: 87).

In essence, legitimacy is primarily an issue of procedural justice. However, research also cautions against blindly embracing its transnational application given the ability of factors unique to countries' histories and contemporary problems to mediate 'the procedural justice effect'. Testing the theory in sub-Saharan Africa, Tankebe (2009b) found that procedural justice lacked empirical validity in the post-colonial context in Ghana, where public co-operation was primarily shaped by perceptions of police effectiveness. Furthermore, national survey data from Australia revealed that procedural justice had a *counterproductive* effect on cooperation levels amongst ethnic minority groups who questioned the legitimacy of the law (Murphy & Cherney, 2011). Meanwhile Bradford *et al*. (2013) in their analysis of survey data from South Africa found that whilst procedural justice did play an important role in fostering legitimacy, the public placed even-greater emphasis on perceptions of police effectiveness in judging legitimacy.

With the exception of the present research, there has yet to be any empirical research into the effect of police procedural fairness on public confidence in policing in Northern Ireland. However, Martin (2013) has flagged up several theoretical and practical points, which suggest a degree of caution when considering the impact of procedural justice in, what have been referred to by the Chief Constable, as Northern Ireland's 'difficult communities'.

In summary, it is argued firstly that a positive and dominant identity of the police, which provides the link between fair procedures and public confidence (more specifically, legitimacy) with Tyler's model, is hard to identity, indeed largely non-existent, in Northern Ireland. Secondly, it is suggested that relational experiences – the mundane, everyday interactions with the public – where procedural justice is primarily exercised, may be heavily mediated and even negated, by emotional and cultural 'memories' of policing in the past – especially within communities at the sharp end of the conflict. And thirdly, the realities of the policing landscape in Northern Ireland's 'difficult communities' tend towards PSNI often engaging in public order policing and counter-terrorism responses – creating a context in which the sustained application of procedural justice is operationally difficult to apply.

It is not argued, however, that procedural fairness should cease to be a priority for the PSNI in such areas, nor that it has any application. Drawing on Braithwaite's (2003) social distance theory, an important distinction can be made between communities who are *resistant* towards the police; and those which are *disengaged* altogether. For the latter, the overriding objective is to disengage from the authority and consequently procedural justice will have limited if any effect at all (Murphy & Cherney, 2011). Whilst this may characterise some communities in Northern Ireland, it is clear from research that communities in some localities are better conceptualized as resistant towards the police, reflecting doubts about the ability of the PSNI to act appropriately and effectively and perhaps rely upon 'alternative' policing providers – but are still willing to 'give them a shot' (Byrne & Monaghan, 2008). Indeed, recent research has suggested that procedural justice may be even more relevant for typically excluded groups who are particularly sensitive to signs of respect and inclusion within groups they have traditionally perceived themselves as being excluded from (Murphy *et al*., 2009; Bradford, 2012; Gau & Brunson, 2010; Huq *et al*., 2011).

### *2.4.2 Social environment*

The expressive understanding of police confidence suggests that public perceptions of policing are shaped by a whole range of sensitivities about community values, social cohesion and order, rather than just evaluations of police effectiveness, such as fear of crime or risk of victimisation (Jackson & Sunshine, 2007; Jackson & Bradford, 2009). There are two stages in this theory. The first is the importance of what low-level disorder, and the connected issues of social cohesion and collective efficacy *mean* for, and are *perceived* by, local residents (Sampson, 2009; Bradford & Myhill, 2014). The second is the connection that the police are considered to have with this perceived social environment – as representatives of order and cohesion in neighbourhoods (Jackson *et al*., 2012). Accordingly, public assessments of the police are closely linked to their perceptions of conditions in their locality. When communities consider their social environment as a 'marker' of order and cohesion, positive features are attributed to the police. Conversely, impressions of community breakdown diminish confidence in policing because "they undermine the narrative of policing – they suggest that there is a *failure* to maintain order and cohesion, and the police are implicated in this failure" (Bradford & Myhill, 2014: 5).

This model has been persuasively adapted to policing in the British context. The police, as a social group, have come to provide an iconography of the *nation* state, expressing a collective national identity which is strongly linked to community and belonging (Loader and Walker, 2001; Loader & Mulcahy, 2003). However imagined the notion of the 'British bobby' may have become, Loader's (1997) account of the process by which the police have come to operate as a symbol for wider sensibilities and fears has found empirical support in recent studies, revealing factors such as collective efficacy and neighbourhood disorder are associated more strongly with public confidence in the police than instrumental factors, such as being a victim of crime or general fears about crime (Jackson & Sunshine, 2007; Jackson & Bradford,

2009). Indeed, Jackson *et al*. (2012) found that neighbourhood context is more important than individual-level characteristics such as age, ethnicity and work status; with Bradford and Myhill (2014) showing that collective efficacy, the most obviously 'expressive' explanatory indicator, was a consistent predictor of confidence in the police. Ultimately, when order is being maintained in the community, by subtle, informal social controls, the police get some of the credit, and their moral authority would appear to be enhanced. (Jackson *et al*., 2012).

In terms of transferring this to the Northern Ireland context, as is evident from research, PSNI do not enjoy a positive and dominant identity or symbolism which connects them to perceptions of order and cohesion (Martin, 2013; Topping & Byrne, 2012). Again, of particular interest here are Ellison *et al*. (2012a) and their study in New Lodge, which specifically assessed the importance of the expressive model of confidence compared to the instrumental model of police effectiveness (discussed below) as a driver of police confidence. Contrary to the findings discussed in the previous paragraphs, Ellison et al (2012a) recorded that overall an instrumental concern with the PSNI's performance in responding to crime is a more powerful predictor of perceptions of positive change in policing than an expressive concern with neighbourhood disorder. As the research highlights however, this concern with performance had an impact only in relation to crime, not anti-social behaviour. Indeed, Ellison *et al*. (2012a) suggest that their results show a rather more muddied picture of the relationship between instrumental and expressive drives of legitimacy, owing in large part to the social change, and disruption, within these communities brought about by transition from conflict to peace.

### *2.4.3 Police effectiveness*

In terms of relating police effectiveness in reducing crime levels to public confidence, Tyler & Jackson (2013) have suggested that no empirical foundation exists to suggest that effectiveness of police in 'fighting crime' is a necessary condition of public confidence in policing (*ibid.* p.11). Indeed, they remark: "what is striking in these studies is the degree to which performance issues are not central to public evaluations" (Tyler and Jackson, 2013:11). Perhaps as a result of this robust affirmation of procedural fairness, though, researchers have generally neglected to think more carefully about the contexts in which performance concerns may be equal, if not more important than, procedural justice judgments in determining perceptions of police legitimacy, and why this might be the case (Tankebe, 2009a; cf. Bradford *et al*., 2014).

Relating to Northern Ireland, it would appear that Nationalist/Republican communities might indeed provide such a context. A general theme in work of Byrne & Monaghan (2008) and McAlister *et al*. (2009) is the emphasis residents placed on the visible clear up of crimes in their neighbourhoods – with their feelings of personal safety linked with perceptions of the PSNI's willingness to arrest and detain offenders, notwithstanding issues related to prosecutions. This in turn was linked to

residents' general sense that their communities were no longer 'safe' places to live, and that social control with respect to young people was no longer effective. Such contentions are supported by Ellison *et al*. (2012a) in that the perceived effectiveness of the PSNI in responding to neighbourhood crime had a statistically significant impact upon perceptions of policing in the New Lodge area of Belfast. What this means is that contrary to research in England, sensitivities about community disorder and social cohesion were less important drivers of public confidence in the PSNI than evaluations of police effectiveness, such as fear of neighbourhood crime.

That concerns of police performance should play a significant role in these communities' evaluations of the police legitimacy is therefore understandable in light of three features common to (mainly) Nationalist/Republican communities. Firstly, since the beginning of the 'peace process' and formation of the PSNI, these communities have experienced both *real* and *perceived* increases in crime – with crime rates in some areas considerably higher than the national average (Byrne & Monaghan, 2008; Ellison, 2010). In part, this may be explained by what has been termed a 'policing vacuum' generated by the 'security gap' left through the withdrawal of paramilitary actors combined with slow political transition to full cooperation with the police (Topping & Byrne, 2012).

Secondly, the evidence would suggest that within such communities, there exists a mismatch of policing expectations in terms of that which was promised as part of the political process and that which is operationally possible by PSNI (Ellison *et al*. 2012a; Byrne & Monaghan, 2008). As noted, the 'new' PSNI were promoted as the 'panacea to neighbourhood crime and disorder' for communities who lacked experience of 'everyday policing' – along with the associated limitations of police capacity (Ellison *et al*., 2012a: 17).

And thirdly, the informal paramilitary 'policing' to which communities had become accustomed in some areas remains as a 'benchmark' for an effective police service (Topping & Byrne, 2012:12). This was evidenced by Ellison *et al*. (2012) who found that over half of respondents believed that the PSNI's performance was either 'very poor' or 'fairly poor'; whilst only 15% felt that the police were effective in tackling anti-social behaviour. In this regard, perceptions of effectiveness may become increasingly important to communities, especially around notions that the police understand local issues, share the concern and are prepared to respond to them; generating a degree of moral alignment between the police and communities.

This analysis is supported by Bradford *et al*. (2013) where in the context of South Africa, they evidence that those who believed the police to be effective were more likely to feel a normative sense of obligation and greater degree of moral alignment with the police.

### *2.4.3 Distributive fairness*

Distributive fairness concerns public beliefs about the fairness with which the service of a police organisation is distributed, particularly in relation to 'other' or 'outside' groups (Bradford *et al.*, 2008; Sunshine & Tyler, 2003b). This in turn feeds into individuals' normative assessment of the fairness of the police (Tankebe, 2013). Whilst the procedural justice model argues that such evaluations are considerably less important than assessments of how police exercise their authority, within Northern Ireland the very nature of its divided society and policing experiences at the community level lend to comparisons between policing in Unionist/Loyalist and Nationalist/Republican communities, itself placing equality treatment at the forefront of evaluations of police legitimacy (Mulcahy, 2006).

As indicated by Byrne & Monaghan (2008:63), both communities (despite being largely unaware of policing tactics and operational constraints) had clear perceptions that the PSNI viewed Protestant and Catholic communities 'differently' and policed them in unjustifiably diverse ways. This was additionally highlighted by McAlister *et al*. (2009) whereby (mainly) young people living in Catholic communities felt that the police offered concessions and protection to the Protestant community; while teenagers in Protestant areas thought Catholic communities got preferential treatment as part of the so-called 'green agenda'.

The police handling of high profile public order disputes has also become a focal point for community perceptions of (un)equal treatment while contributing to overall community attitudes towards the PSNI (Byrne *et al*., 2013:48). And especially set with the context of parading, the 'flags' protests and public disorder more generally, communities have readily made value-judgements on how 'the other' is policed (*Ibid*). Most recently, senior Nationalist politicians have pointed to the apparently differential treatment of Nationalist/Republican communities blocking roads in North Belfast in 2010 – and who were forcibly removed from by the PSNI. Yet at the same time, they have pointed to the 'passive' PSNI response in the face of Loyalist road blocks during the so-called 'flag protests' during the winter of 2012-13 (BBC Spotlight, 2013). Yet in spite of the Chief Constable arguing that there were clear operational and situational differences which in each case justified differential responses, such perceptions have become reality – highlighted by one senior Nationalist politician who stated: *"The Loyalists get away with it…one rule for one, one rule f*or another" (BBC Spotlight, 2013).

### *2.4.4 Political influence on local perceptions of policing*

As suggested by Bradford *et al*. (2014), there are likely to be multiple predictors of people's ideas about and attitudes towards the police, to include political influences such as the strength of democratic processes, state legitimacy and historical-institutional context. Thus, within the Northern Ireland context, community perceptions of policing have a tendency to ebb and flow with broader developments in

the political sphere in a way that is perhaps more direct than in difficult communities in the rest of the UK (Ellison, 2010). As argued, the past decade in Northern Ireland has shown that "police reform and political change tend to be two sides of the same coin… movement or inertia in one impacts either negatively or positively on the other". Most prominently in 2007, Catholic support for the PSNI increased by 6% in the three months following the decision by Sinn Fein, the country's largest Nationalist/Republican party, to support the PSNI and participate in the new policing structures (Ellison, 2010:250).

Stemming from the recent 'flags' issues (as noted above), there have been suggestions from Unionist/Loyalist quarters that police actions have been 'politically motivated', with PSNI accused of pursuing particular agendas as part of their operational policing (BBC News, 2014; BBC Spotlight, 2013). As evidenced at the local level, one DUP representative addressing a gathering at a Loyalist parade spoke of being *"ashamed of the PSNI… the political policing and persecution of our protestant people must stop. No surrender everyone, no surrender!"* (BBC Spotlight, 2013). Such political accusations have lead the Chief Constable to express concern that the PSNI has neither "the political buy in" from Northern Ireland's leading parties; nor has it been provided with a long term vision or social planning framework that is needed to compliment policing efforts within these difficult communities (Alaninbelfast, 2013).

Speaking in relation to the First Minister's criticism of the police handling of the flag protests, the Chief Constable has further argued that the protests were an incredibly volatile situation that was "made all the more difficult by the absence of political consensus" (BBC News 2013b). Furthermore, the last year has also witnessed politicians call on members of the public to attend particular parades or protests, with tacit encouragement for people to defy the law insofar as these 'rally cries' and the presence of politicians at contested parades prior to violent exchanges can emphasize the political symbolism underlying public order situations – adding to community sentiment that policing is being delivered with 'bias' (Byrne *et al*., 2013: 63). However, it is Maurice Hayes, a former member of the Patten Commission, who noted that the abdication of political responsibility by the politicians has left the police making the highly contentious decisions as to parades and protests (BBC Spotlight, 2013). Thus, PSNI have been placed at the forefront of the most heated disputes in socially and economically deprived communities, where support for the PSNI does not correlate with national averages suggested by the NIPB (Topping, 2008b). In this regard, the PSNI have often acted as "human shock absorbers for the contestations on the streets" (Nolan, 2013: 72).

# 3.0 METHODOLOGY

The following section outlines the central aims and objectives of the research along with the methodology employed as part of the overall research related to the key drivers of public confidence in the police.

## 3.1 Research aims and objectives

As per the original tender, the main aim of the research was to provide a quantitative, empirical assessment of the key drivers that influence confidence in policing generally, and the PSNI specifically within a Northern Ireland context. As part of achieving this, the research aims include:

a. The nature of current NIPB and PSNI 'measures' and metrics of community confidence in PSNI and the policing institutions;

b. An understanding of divergences between that which constitutes operational and strategic understandings of confidence from a police-organisational perspective; and

c. Divergences between current police institutional measures of community confidence and that derived from local, national, and international academic/practitioner research.

### 3.2 Research Methodology

In order to comprehensively address all of the research aims and objectives, it was on the one hand appropriate to develop a methodology to capture the range of complex and overlapping factors which comprise 'confidence' in the police. On the other hand, it was also recognised that in order to provide an in-depth analysis of 'police confidence', a more sophisticated and detailed range of measures would be required above and beyond that currently available from the NIPB or DoJ.

It should be noted from the outset that the present research is the first of its kind to address the issue of confidence in police on a national level outside that of current, publicly available measures. Furthermore, beyond the geographically limited research conducted by Ellison *et al*. (2012), it is also unique insofar as it additionally applies the latest evidence-based police confidence research on a Northern Ireland-wide context – an area of research previously neglected as noted in the literature. In this regard, while needing a robust methodological approach it must be acknowledged that the research is to an extent, exploratory – with no directly comparable data sets nor metrics from which comparison or interpretation can be made in terms of policing in the country.

Finally, it is important to highlight that throughout the duration of the research the researchers kept in regular contact with representatives of the NIPB to ratify elements of the methodology and provide updates on the research. The research approach is therefore outlined below.

### 3.3 Research Design

In the context of research design, above and beyond the qualitative research associated with the researchers' parallel work (qualitative dynamics of political, community and media influence on confidence), the aim of the current research was to provide quantitative 'measures' of police confidence based upon best practice from the existing police research.

It is of note that due to the small-scale nature of the research, a nationally representative sample survey to challenge that already delivered by the NIPB or DoJ was neither possible nor practicable. Thus, it was decided from the outset that the most effective way in which to bridge such practical research constraints – yet tap into a nationally representative sample of views and attitudes to police confidence – was to engage with all PCSPs across Northern Ireland. The rationale for such an approach additionally relied on the fact that PCSP members act as *de facto* public representatives on policing matters across the country. And while it cannot be discounted that political (or other) opinion may pervade PCSPs by virtue of their composition, with quantitative measures couched in terms of the process and nature of

policing attitudes and encounters, it is possible to capture (in an objective fashion) key drivers of confidence which can be turned into tangible data (Bradford, 2011).

### 3.4 Quantitative Design & Measures

As noted in the literature, a key challenge to the present research set within Northern Ireland has been the lack of academic and policy attention devoted to the technical measurement of confidence in the police – in spite of efforts in England/Wales and North America. Thus, beyond the broad-brush questions posed by the NIPB as part of their omnibus survey for example, a significant task has been to distil and adapt the latest academic research; and adapt existing approaches to data capture which are able to integrate Northern Ireland-specific issues.

As part of the research, the team conducted an exhaustive review of current research literature on public confidence in the police. Drawing upon national and international research, policy and practice, a quantitative survey was created to encompass the main elements, determinants and variables associated with public confidence in the police. In this regard, the survey was broken into six key sections as follows:

- **Perceptions of PSNI: the organisation and community identification**
- **Processes of communication between PSNI and the public**
- **Processes of interaction between PSNI and the public**
- **The nature of public encounters with PSNI**
- **Service delivery**
- **Politics and security considerations**

All sections (and accompanying sub-sections) were measured on a 'Likert' scale of one to five, where PCSP respondents were asked to consider either the importance of statements, or the influence of particular dynamics at local or national levels (see *Appendix* 1 for detailed questions). An additional range of variables were also built into the survey in order to assist with a more nuanced analysis of respondent attitudes and opinions. These included:

- **PCSP designation;**
- **Political/independent status;**
- **Employment status;**
- **Gender;**
- **Age;**
- **Time served on PCSP;**
- **Community background**

For the purposes of confidentiality and anonymity, the survey was designed so that respondents could not be identified from their responses, nor could it be inferred from the data. An additional 'welcoming statement' from the NIPB Chief Executive was also included as part of the survey introduction to assure respondents in this regard.

Finally, it must be noted that as part of its delivery the research was considered and approved by the Faculty of Social Sciences Ethics Filter Committee at University of Ulster as per their *Code of Practice for Professional Integrity in the Conduct of Research*.

### 3.5 Delivering the Survey

It was agreed between NIPB representatives and the research team that following the design and agreed format of the survey tool, the NIPB would distribute the survey to all PCSPs through existing administrative channels. The survey was created using the 'Smart Survey' programme and distributed via email link to all 26 PCSPs, and 4 District PCSP's in Belfast through their PCSP Managers. In total, PCSP members were given 14 days in which to consider and respond to the survey questions through the 'Smart Survey' programme. Where necessary, hard copies of the survey were also made available in order maximise returns.

### 3.6 Survey Response Rate

While the detail of the survey will be analysed in later sections, it is important to provide data as to the response rate for the survey. Through the PCSPs, the survey's maximum population 'reach' was 506 PCSP members across Northern Ireland, including Chairs and Vice-Chairs. In total, the research team received 164 responses. However, it must be noted that not all survey responses were fully completed, with a number of respondents failing to complete some of the survey questions and/or sections relating to socio-demographic variables and PCSP affiliation. For a more detailed breakdown of returns by socio-demographic variables, please see *Appendix 2*.

| | |
|---|---|
| **Total possible survey returns:** | **506** |
| **Actual survey returns:** | **164** |
| **Percentage survey return:** | **32.4%** |

### 3.6.1 Identifiable PCSP returns:

| 7. What PCSP/DPCSP are you a Manager/Member of? Please tick all that apply | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | Response Percent | Response Total |
| 1 | Antrim | 3.05% | 4 |
| 2 | Ards | 4.58% | 6 |
| 3 | Armagh | 3.82% | 5 |
| 4 | Ballymena | 1.53% | 2 |
| 5 | Ballymoney | 3.82% | 5 |
| 6 | Banbridge | 3.05% | 4 |
| 7 | Belfast | 5.34% | 7 |
| 8 | Carrickfergus | 2.29% | 3 |
| 9 | Castlereagh | 4.58% | 6 |
| 10 | Coleraine | 6.87% | 9 |
| 11 | Cookstown | 3.05% | 4 |
| 12 | Craigavon | 3.05% | 4 |
| 13 | Derry | 6.11% | 8 |
| 14 | Down | 4.58% | 6 |
| 15 | Dungannon & South Tyrone | 3.82% | 5 |
| 16 | Fermanagh | 6.11% | 8 |
| 17 | Larne | 1.53% | 2 |
| 18 | Limavady | 5.34% | 7 |
| 19 | Lisburn | 1.53% | 2 |
| 20 | Magherafelt | 5.34% | 7 |
| 21 | Moyle | 4.58% | 6 |
| 22 | Newry & Mourne | 3.82% | 5 |
| 23 | Newtownabbey | 5.34% | 7 |
| 24 | North Down | 4.58% | 6 |
| 25 | Omagh | 2.29% | 3 |
| 26 | Strabane | 3.82% | 5 |
| 27 | North Belfast DPCSP | 1.53% | 2 |
| 28 | South Belfast DPCSP | 0.76% | 1 |
| 29 | East Belfast DPCSP | 0.00% | 0 |
| 30 | West Belfast DPCSP | 0.00% | 0 |
| | | answered | 131 |
| | | skipped | 32 |

# 4.0 Survey findings

As noted above, the online survey was made available to all 506 PCSP members in Northern Ireland and yielded a return of 32.4% (164 PCSP members). Of this sample, 30% indicated a political affiliation, while 70% stated they were independent members.

The following section explores the main findings from the survey, set against a series of key themes derived from the latest research on police confidence, including:

- **public *perceptions* of the police;**
- **processes of *communication* between the police and the public;**
- **processes of *interaction* between PSNI and the public;**
- **the nature of public *encounters* with PSNI;**
- **the *service delivered* by the police;**
- **and *politics and security* considerations.**

Respondents were given a set of 'Likert scale' choices in relation to each of the questions posed (see *Appendix 1*). For the purposes of analysis, responses that indicated a 'neutral' or 'middle' position for questions were discarded. In this regard, responses which elicited 'definite' views were grouped together as a means of aggregating the data for the purposes of analysis.

### 4.1 Perceptions of PSNI: Organisation and Community Identification

Participants were initially asked a series of questions to ascertain their perceptions of the PSNI in both an organisational and operational context. *Table 1* (below) provides an overview of the responses from PCSP members:

***Table 1*:**

**Question One - In terms of general perceptions of the PSNI within your area, how important/unimportant do you think the following statements are?** *

| | **Unimportant & very unimportant** | **Important & very important** |
|---|---|---|
| That PSNI are perceived to be professional | 6% | 73% |
| That the public identifies with PSNI in terms of local officers | 11% | 73% |
| That PSNI are perceived to be effective | 11% | 72% |
| That PSNI are there to address fear of crime | 14% | 70% |
| That PSNI are perceived to react to crime | 13% | 70% |
| That PSNI are perceived to prevent to crime | 15% | 66% |
| That PSNI can be sensitive to community background & history | 17% | 65% |
| That the public identifies with PSNI in terms of PSNI goals and objectives | 20% | 53% |
| That the public identifies with PSNI in terms composition | 18% | 47% |

* In total 158 respondents participated in this question

Overall, the results from Question One indicate very high expectations in relation to perceptions around the professionalism of the organisation (73%), closely related to a clear public desire to be able to identify with local officers (73%). However, there was less of a perceived need for PSNI to be sensitive to community background (65%) in the delivery of policing – and in a relative sense compared to operational effectiveness. Indeed, the results highlight the importance that PSNI are perceived to be effective (outcomes to policing), at 71%. It was also of note that respondents evidenced a lower level of priority in terms of feeling they needed to identify with PSNI policy, goals and objectives (at 53%) compared to PSNI outputs – or policing 'being seen to be done'.

Furthermore, 66% of respondents to the survey believed it was important that PSNI should be seen to be involved in preventing crime i.e. preventative policing (or 'something that never was'), potentially linked to local desires for lower levels of crime and increased levels of community policing. But a slightly higher response (at

70%) also evidence a perception that it was important PSNI were seen to be reacting to crime, linked to being visible, fighting crime and dealing with particular issues. This was matched by equally high expectations (70%) that PSNI are there to deal with 'fear of crime'. Indeed, the implication of this is that respondents expected PSNI to act as a 'catch-all' organisation in terms of dealing with a range of criminal and non-criminal matters, which broadly fell under the heading of policing. This could also evidence the fact that respondents – and laterally the public more generally – have unrealistic expectations of that which PSNI can deliver on the ground; or that PSNI themselves are not adequately communicating organisational limitations as to their policing service.

**Drivers of confidence**

In terms of the drivers of confidence in policing, the results clearly place an emphasis on the importance of police effectiveness, or in other words, producing tangible results, along with a belief that the PSNI should be in a position to address the fear of crime – as a lens through which a variety of social, community and crime 'stressors' coalesce into a feeling that 'more policing' is required, regardless of whether it falls under the remit of PSNI responsibility.

### 4.2 Processes of Communication Between PSNI and the General Public

In addition to the initial perceptions of respondents in relation to policing by PSNI within their PCSP area, they were also asked to consider the importance of communication between the PSNI and local communities. *Table 2* outlines the responses in terms views and attitudes on the levels and types of communication between the police and members of the public at a local level.

***Table 2*:**

**Question Two - In terms of communication between the PSNI and the local community, how important/unimportant do you think the following statements are?** *

| | **Unimportant & very unimportant** | **Important & very important** |
|---|---|---|
| That PSNI are open and honest when they make mistakes | 17% | 71% |
| That PSNI articulate the successful policing operations and events | 12% | 71% |
| That PSNI communicate effectively in terms of everyday local policing | 10% | 67% |
| That PSNI publicly follow-up on events and operations | 15% | 67% |
| That PSNI publicly justify operations of community importance | 13% | 61% |
| That PSNI let the public know about limitations to their capacity or operations | 16% | 60% |
| That PSNI communicate effectively in terms of security-type policing | 10% | 58% |

* In total 151 respondents participated in this question

The results show that participants place a high level of importance on PSNI communicating effectively about everyday, local policing matters (at 67%), compared to the importance attached to communication about security situation-type policing (58%). Furthermore, a high level of importance was attached to PSNI publicly 'justifying' operations in terms of events of community importance (61%); along with communicating on follow up operations (67%). This can be related to a sense of community desire to understand why particular forms of policing are being delivered; and what the expected purpose/outcome might be.

It was interesting to note that three fifths of respondents (60%) also felt it was important or very important that PSNI communicated limitations to their operations and capacity. Related to the findings in *Table 1*, this may be contextualised insofar as communities did want to feel that local policing was effective, but should not be given un-realistic expectations or indeterminate objectives. In terms of PSNI acknowledging potential mistakes (as broadly conceived), respondents were vey clear (71%) that it

was very/important for PSNI in terms of their communication processes when particular aspects of policing, for example, had not succeeded or necessarily achieved desired outcomes. However, an equal percentage of respondents also believed it important or very important that PSNI fully articulate their 'successes' on policing matters. One interpretation of this finding is that respondents perhaps feel PSNI need to place more emphasis on 'advertising' the positive work and operations at a community level.

**Drivers of confidence**

In terms of drivers of confidence in relation to communication between the PSNI and the public, results clearly suggest that respondents place most importance on the openness and honesty of communications in relation to 'everyday' policing (both positive and negative) by PSNI. Although it must be remembered over half of respondents still placed a high level of importance on communication about security situation policing. The logical extension of this particular data from the survey is that members of the public are acutely aware of local crime and policing issues. And where they are presented with information that does not fully explain or contradicts local 'knowledge' (whether factually robust or not) it has the power to significantly influence confidence in PSNI.

### 4.3 Processes of Interaction Between PSNI and the General Public

Beyond communication, the survey also sought to gather data on respondent understandings and perceptions about the processes of interaction between the public and PSNI. *Table 3* provides an overview of participant views on various levels and forms of contact between the PSNI and the public.

***Table 3*:**

**Questions 3 - In terms of contact between the PSNI and the local community, how important/unimportant do you think the following statements are?** *

| | **Unimportant & very unimportant** | **Important & very important** |
|---|---|---|
| That contact between public and PSNI should be made simple & easy | 5% | 92% |
| That personal contact can be obtained when required | 4% | 82% |
| That the outcome with interactions with PSNI is fair | 5% | 82% |
| That the public get an opportunity to have their voice heard | 6% | 80% |
| That third parties, such as voluntary/community sector groups are used as vehicles for communication on policing issues | 12% | 68% |

* In total 146 respondents participated in this question

The findings revealed that high levels of importance are attached to both the ease of contact and personal contact with PSNI where necessary, at 92% and 82% respectively. Furthermore, 82% of respondents indicated that it was important or very important that outcomes to interaction with PSNI interactions are fair. This could suggest that respondents place less importance on how decisions are arrived at. This should however, be read in conjunction with *Table 4* in which respondents to an extent, contradict themselves in this finding by suggesting (at 87%) they are less interested in the outcome than the process by which that decision was arrived at. Although perhaps the finding in *Table 4* is more bound the attitude and manner of PSNI officers than strictly procedure.

It is also of note that 80% of respondents indicated that the public should be provided with opportunities in which their views can be heard. Indeed, while the survey did not capture whether participants felt they actually did have their voice heard (deliberately omitted due to the survey being targeted at PCSP members), it highlights that any processes of interaction should have an in-built means of capturing community views of that interaction. It should also be noted that over two-thirds of respondents felt it was important or very important (68%) that community intermediaries (such as voluntary/community groups) were used as a means through

which to potentially enhance community contact with PSNI. While that was not specifically defined, it is reflective of the prominent position the voluntary/community sector occupies within many PCSP areas across the country. However, this must be compared to the absolute importance placed on personal contact with the PSNI (82%) for policing matters.

**Drivers of confidence**

The findings in respect of contact with PSNI and drivers of public confidence are that the public place a significant emphasis on regular, consistent and simple access to the PSNI. Furthermore, the data would also suggest that contact is a two-way process and it is vital that local populations feel PSNI will listen to their views on policing matters. This should be read in conjunction with *Table 2* in respect to openness and honesty about policing operations.

### 4.4 Nature of Interaction Between PSNI and the Public

Beyond the actual processes of police-community interaction *per se*, a key element within the survey related to actual *nature* of interactions between the public and members of the PSNI – related to the more personal aspects of contact. *Table 4* highlights the main findings from respondents in relation to how much importance they placed on the nature of contact between the public and police officers.

***Table 4*:**

**Question 4 - When members of the public do come into contact with PSNI officers, how important/unimportant do you think the following statements are?** *

| | **Unimportant & very unimportant** | **Important & very important** |
|---|---|---|
| That PSNI officer attitudes should be appropriate to the encounter | 5% | 88% |
| That PSNI officers use discretion to deal with a situation if appropriate | 6% | 87% |
| That members of the public feel the decision making process in encounters was fair, regardless of outcomes | 6% | 87% |
| That members of the public feel their treatment was fair, regardless of outcomes | 6% | 85% |
| That the public feel they can hold police accountable for everyday policing | 7% | 81% |
| That the public feel they can hold police accountable for administrative processes of policing | 13% | 67% |
| That the public feel they can hold police accountable for security-related policing | 14% | 63% |

*In total 145 participated in this question

The findings revealed that participants place a high level of importance (88%) on the fact that individual police officers attitude should be appropriate to the type of encounter they face. While this was not developed further according to different situations, it can be assumed this was a general sentiment applicable to a broad range of police-public encounters. Indeed, this can be linked to data related to the importance respondents placed on both the decision-making processes and fairness of treatment, at 87% and 85% respectively. Although returning to *Table 3*, it may be observed that the responses related to these instrumental forms of interaction are valued more highly than outcomes to the interaction.

It was also interesting to note that a significant number of respondents felt it was important that officers should be able to use discretion, when appropriate, to deal with particular situations, at 87%. Contextualising this finding in relation to the data on the desire for openness and honesty from PSNI (*Table 2*); along with a prioritisation of process over outcomes as noted, it may suggest that respondents are more interested in policing which is efficient, locally grounded and delivers quick resolutions to particular situations as opposed to remote, more centrally target-driven policing.

The other interesting finding to be drawn from this question set relates to the fact that respondents were significantly less interested in police accountability for 'security' versus 'everyday' policing at 63% and 81% respectively. On the one hand, this could be interpreted as a tacit 'acceptance' of the current security environment and necessary policing operations. But on the other hand, it may also evidence that in an absolute sense of the data, respondents were ultimately keen to make sure they could hold PSNI to account for the policing service they expected to see and related to at a local level.

**Drivers of confidence**

The findings in respect of confidence and the nature of police-public encounters lend support to the notion that the public believe that any interaction with the police should be underpinned by principles of 'fairness' and 'equality'. Furthermore, confidence also appears to be related to the public's realisation that they can hold the police to account for their actions. Indeed, a key issue to be derived is the fact confidence is driven by local, personal and tangible nature of policing – confirmed when read in conjunction with *Table 1* and a significantly lower appetite to connect with the more remote and central policy and goals of PSNI.

### 4.5 Service Delivery by PSNI

In addition the process and nature of PSNI interactions with the public, the survey then posed a series of questions that were aimed at understanding respondent views on the importance of service delivery in relation to confidence in the police. *Table 5* presents the findings from respondents in relation to the importance placed on various aspects of PSNI service delivery.

***Table 5*:**

**Question 5 - As part of the policing service delivered by PSNI within your PCSP area, how important/unimportant are the following statements?** *

| | **Unimportant & very unimportant** | **Important & very important** |
|---|---|---|
| That PSNI recognise the contributions of community-based organisations and bodies to policing | 9% | 77% |
| That PSNI are always visible | 10% | 75% |
| That the local community feels a sense of ownership over local policing matters | 11% | 71% |
| That policing resources are delivered strictly on the basis of need and priority, even if that runs contrary to local perceptions of policing need | 10% | 65% |
| That PSNI response times are adequate when called in an emergency | 13% | 63% |
| That slower response times are acceptable for low-priority incidents | 17% | 39% |

* In total 141 respondents participated in this question

The results revealed that respondents placed a high level of importance on the visibility of PSNI in general (75%) as part of confidence in service delivery. It was also noted that a sense of 'community ownership' (71%) over local policing matters was also ranked as important/very important as part of the service-orientation to interaction between the public and the PSNI. This should also be read in conjunction with *Table 3* which attached high importance to the public 'having a voice' in local policing. But interestingly, the level of importance attached to that of 'community ownership' and input as part of PSNI's service delivery actually outweighed that of the importance given to PSNI communicating to communities over policing matters in *Table 2*. The inference being that confidence in PSNI can be enhanced where more space for 'community' is afforded as part of a local police service.

It was also of note that only 39% thought it important or very important that slower response times were acceptable for low-priority incidents. This should be read in conjunction with the slightly contradictory finding from respondents that it was important (65%) that need and priority should dictate the delivery of police service. This may suggest that while communities feel it is important to have a 'quick' response to matters (as well as visible policing), there may be a degree of flexibility in terms of accepting a reduced 'depth' of service where they understand where their issues sit with other priorities.

Finally, the findings highlighted the importance respondents placed on the need for the PSNI to recognise the contributions to policing and community safety from the voluntary and community sectors (77%). Read along with the data from *Table 3* where it was deemed important that voluntary/community organisations should be used as a vehicle for communication over policing matters, this current finding further cements the need for greater emphasis, acceptance and focus on civil society as part of wider policing agendas generally – and confidence in PSNI specifically.

**Drivers of confidence**

The drivers of confidence to be derived from this particular question set on service delivery place a focus on the desire for a PSNI presence, along with community 'ownership' over local policing. It is also evident that confidence in PSNI in terms of service delivery is a two-way process. However, the findings suggest emphasis needs to be placed firmly at the community end of that 'equation'. Furthermore, the voluntary/community sector occupy an important 'space' as part of the wider delivery of policing at the local level – with more recognition in this respect deemed important by respondents as part of developing confidence.

### 4.6 Politics and Security Considerations

The survey concluded with a series of questions focusing on respondent views in relation to the influence and role of politics, paramilitarism, organised crime and parades/protests on confidence in PSNI. *Table 6* highlights the findings from those questions – which additionally provided respondents with an opportunity to consider that influence on a local and national level.

***Table 6*:**

**Question 6 - How much influence do you attach to the following statements around politics and security?***

| | Little or no influence | Some or a lot of influence |
|---|---|---|
| The extent to which public disorder influences confidence in PSNI in terms of parades | 14% | 74% |
| The extent to which public disorder influences confidence in PSNI in terms of flags | 12% | 74% |
| The extent to which PSNI are open about security constraints on the delivery of day-to-day policing influences confidence | 7% | 71% |
| The extent to which political opinion influences confidence in PSNI at a national level | 11% | 67% |
| The extent to which organised crime influences confidence in PSNI at a local level | 16% | 64% |
| The extent to which organised crime influences confidence in PSNI at a national level | 13% | 63% |
| The extent to which paramilitary activity influences confidence in PSNI at a national level | 18% | 59% |
| The extent to which political opinion influences confidence in PSNI at a local level | 18% | 57% |
| The extent to which paramilitary activity influences confidence in PSNI at a local level | 22% | 55% |

* In total 137 respondents participated in this question

The results point to the fact that 57% of respondents believe political opinion influences public opinion on PSNI confidence at the local level; with a slightly higher proportion of respondents (67%) of the view that political opinion influenced confidence in policing 'some' or 'a lot' at the national level. In terms of this data, it would suggest that aside from PSNI efforts at an operational or strategic level, politics still command a significant position within the confidence equation.

Turning to paramilitary activity, over half of respondents at 55% and 59% of respondents (respectively) believed that paramilitarism still exerted some or a lot of influence on police confidence in policing – both locally and nationally. While the term 'paramilitarism' was not broken down to consider either influences from Loyalist or Republican groupings, it was the general extent of their (perceived) continuing influence which is of note.

In terms of organised crime and its impact on police confidence, 64% and 63% of respondents (respectively) believed organised crime influences confidence in policing locally and nationally. Again, the term organised crime was not broken down to any finer degrees of granularity. But the data would indicate that there is a perception that the PSNI's ability to deal with this particular form of criminality (and whether or not that is itself linked to paramilitarism) remains significant as part of developing understanding of police confidence across the country.

The survey also asked respondents to reflect on the relevance of parades and flags on wider public confidence in the PSNI. The results clearly show that participants felt that any public disorder emanating from parades (74%) or flags (74%) had the potential to influence wider levels of confidence in policing. It could be suggested that the slightly higher weighting given to the influence on confidence of public disorder related parades (as broadly defined) is symptomatic of the embedded and cyclical nature of the issue. In contrast, the slightly lower weighting given to the influence on confidence of public disorder related to the flags protests may be indicative of the more localised, specific context out of which the issue has emerged.

Finally, the survey results point to the fact that 71% of respondents felt that PSNI's level of openness about the effects of the security situation on day-to-day policing operations had a significant influence on the public's confidence in policing. This should additionally be read in conjunction with the data from *Table 2* which noted that 60% of respondents felt it important or very important that PSNI were open about limitations to capacity and operations more generally. It may be argued from the data that respondents are acutely aware of the tensions between 'normal' and 'security' policing – and that more acknowledgement of that on behalf of PSNI would help to build confidence as part of open and transparent dialogue.

**Drivers of confidence**

In terms of understanding the drivers of public confidence related to political and security influences, this question set pointed not so much to what enhanced confidence in PSNI, but to those dynamics that have the potential to negatively impact upon confidence. Indeed, political opinion, paramilitary, and organised crime along with public disorder all appear to be significant inhibitors of confidence in the PSNI. However, it is public acceptance by PSNI of the constraints these dynamics place upon operational and 'everyday' policing which would appear to be the starting point from which mitigating their impacts upon police confidence may be imagined.

## 5.0 Summary of key findings

It is clear that confidence in PSNI is comprised of a wide range of dynamics, not limited to that of PSNI service or operations in isolation. The data derived from the survey has thus gone some way to empirically defining that which comprises public confidence in the police beyond simplistic measures as to whether PSNI are 'doing a good job'.

A key inference to draw from the data is the fact that the PSNI are viewed as a 'catch-all' organisation. From a public perspective, confidence in PSNI is based on (perhaps unrealistic) expectations that officers are permanently visible, effective, fair and quick in their response. Similarly, confidence is also derived from the public feeling they should have high levels of local oversight and input into policing matters.

However, the survey would also suggest that such 'expectations' of PSNI to deliver on 'all fronts' and the implications for confidence could be tempered with more clear and honest communication from the police themselves. With high degrees of importance attached to ease of access and openness as to organisational limitations on service delivery, more realistic assessments of that which is achievable for PSNI could help enhance community trust and confidence. This must be further contextualised in terms of the data which points to the acute impact paramilitarism, politics and organised crime additionally have on police confidence. But also of note, such potential 'negotiations' in relation to these confidence dynamics need to be conducted at the local level, with the evidence pointing to less of a public affinity with centralised PSNI edicts and policy.

Finally, the survey has demonstrated that as part of understanding drivers of confidence in PSNI, the emphasis on the 'community end' of police-community interaction should be a key concern. On the one hand, respondents highlighted the importance of local oversight and input into policing matters (notwithstanding the effectiveness of PCSPs). Yet on the other hand, the findings would point to the fact a much greater degree of depth and measurement to capture views of police-community interaction is required at the local level. In turn, this would not only help PSNI understand specific drivers of confidence within particular localities or districts, but so too it would allow PSNI to locally 'tailor' messages and information to best mitigate the emergent 'expectation deficit' from the findings in terms of building confidence.

Ultimately, the findings from the survey provide a community-grounded starting point from which PSNI can begin to understand the key dynamics which comprise confidence in their organisation beyond simply 'delivering a better service' or 'more officers on the ground'. In fact, the data would actually suggest that *less* policing by PSNI is both acceptable not necessarily detrimental to public confidence in the police. But only where PSNI are open about (limits to) capacity and service delivery; and see

information sharing as but one strand of the wide range of dynamics which comprise confidence in the organisation.

# 5.0 *Appendicies*

## 5.1 Breakdown of Survey Results by Question

## 1. Perceptions of PSNI: The Organisation and Community Identification

**1. Thinking about general perceptions of the PSNI within your PCSP area, consider the following statements which should be ranked on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 = very unimportant and 5 = very important:**

| | 1 = Very unimportant | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 = Very important | Response Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| that PSNI are perceived to be professional | 3.2% (5) | 2.5% (4) | 20.9% (33) | 21.5% (34) | 51.9% (82) | 158 |
| that PSNI are perceived to be effective | 3.8% (6) | 7.6% (12) | 17.1% (27) | 24.7% (39) | 46.8% (74) | 158 |
| that the public identifies with PSNI in terms of local officers | 3.8% (6) | 7.0% (11) | 17.1% (27) | 31.6% (50) | 40.5% (64) | 158 |
| that the public identifies with PSNI in terms of composition | 5.7% (9) | 12.0% (19) | 35.4% (56) | 28.5% (45) | 18.4% (29) | 158 |
| that the public identifies with PSNI in terms of police goals/objectives | 4.4% (7) | 15.8% (25) | 27.2% (43) | 32.9% (52) | 19.6% (31) | 158 |
| that PSNI can be sensitive to community background and history | 5.1% (8) | 11.4% (18) | 18.4% (29) | 27.2% (43) | 38.0% (60) | 158 |
| that PSNI are perceived to prevent crime | 3.2% (5) | 11.4% (18) | 17.1% (27) | 22.2% (35) | 46.2% (73) | 158 |
| that PSNI are perceived to react to crime | 5.7% (9) | 7.6% (12) | 16.5% (26) | 17.1% (27) | 53.2% (84) | 158 |
| that PSNI are there to address fear of crime | 4.4% (7) | 9.5% (15) | 16.5% (26) | 32.3% (51) | 37.3% (59) | 158 |
| | | | | | answered | 158 |
| | | | | | skipped | 1 |

## 2. Processes of Communication between PSNI and the Public

**2. Considering how you know about policing in your PCSP area and receive information from PSNI, consider the following statements which should be ranked on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 = very unimportant and 5 = very important:**

| | 1 = Very unimportant | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 = Very important | Response Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| that PSNI communicate effectively in terms of everyday, local policing | 2.6% (4) | 7.9% (12) | 22.5% (34) | 29.1% (44) | 37.7% (57) | 151 |
| that PSNI communicate effectively in terms of security situation-type policing | 2.0% (3) | 7.9% (12) | 32.5% (49) | 25.8% (39) | 31.8% (48) | 151 |
| that PSNI publicly justify operations of community importance | 3.3% (5) | 9.9% (15) | 26.5% (40) | 28.5% (43) | 31.8% (48) | 151 |
| that PSNI publicly follow-up on events and operations | 3.3% (5) | 11.3% (17) | 18.7% (28) | 30.7% (46) | 36.0% (54) | 150 |
| that PSNI let the public know about limitations to their capacity or operations | 3.3% (5) | 12.6% (19) | 24.5% (37) | 31.1% (47) | 28.5% (43) | 151 |
| that PSNI articulate the successful policing operations and events | 2.0% (3) | 9.9% (15) | 17.2% (26) | 35.8% (54) | 35.1% (53) | 151 |
| that PSNI are open and honest when they make mistakes | 7.3% (11) | 9.3% (14) | 13.2% (20) | 18.5% (28) | 51.7% (78) | 151 |
| | | | | | answered | 151 |
| | | | | | skipped | 8 |

## 3. Processes of Interaction between PSNI and the Public

| 3. Thinking about the potential for contact and interaction between the PSNI and the community in your PCSP area, the following statements should be ranked on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 = very unimportant and 5 = very important: | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **1 = Very unimportant** | **2** | **3** | **4** | **5 = Very important** | **Response Total** |
| that contact between public and PSNI should be made simple and easy | 4.1% (6) | 0.7% (1) | 3.4% (5) | 27.4% (40) | 64.4% (94) | 146 |
| that personal contact can be obtained when required | 2.7% (4) | 1.4% (2) | 13.7% (20) | 36.3% (53) | 45.9% (67) | 146 |
| that the outcome of interactions with PSNI is fair | 3.4% (5) | 2.1% (3) | 13.0% (19) | 30.8% (45) | 50.7% (74) | 146 |
| that the public get an opportunity to have their voice heard | 4.1% (6) | 2.1% (3) | 14.4% (21) | 31.5% (46) | 47.9% (70) | 146 |
| that third parties, such as voluntary/community sector groups are used as vehicles for communication on policing issues | 5.5% (8) | 6.8% (10) | 19.2% (28) | 35.6% (52) | 32.9% (48) | 146 |
| | | | | | answered | 146 |
| | | | | | skipped | 13 |

## 4. The Nature of Public Encounters with PSNI

**4. When members of the public do come into contact with PSNI officers, consider the following statements as part of policing in your PCSP area and rank them on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 = very unimportant and 5 = very important:**

| | 1 = Very unimportant | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 = Very important | Response Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| that officer attitudes should be appropriate to the encounter | 2.8% (4) | 2.1% (3) | 6.9% (10) | 26.9% (39) | 61.4% (89) | 145 |
| that PSNI officers use discretion to deal with a situation if appropriate | 2.8% (4) | 3.4% (5) | 6.9% (10) | 35.9% (52) | 51.0% (74) | 145 |
| that members of the public feel the decision making process in encounters was fair, regardless of outcomes | 4.2% (6) | 2.1% (3) | 6.9% (10) | 27.1% (39) | 59.7% (86) | 144 |
| that members of the public feel their treatment was fair, regardless of outcomes | 4.9% (7) | 1.4% (2) | 8.4% (12) | 23.1% (33) | 62.2% (89) | 143 |
| that the public feel they can hold police accountable for everyday policing | 5.6% (8) | 2.1% (3) | 11.9% (17) | 32.9% (47) | 47.6% (68) | 143 |
| that the public feel they can hold police accountable for security-related policing | 6.3% (9) | 7.7% (11) | 23.1% (33) | 30.8% (44) | 32.2% (46) | 143 |
| that the public feel they can hold police accountable for administrative processes of policing | 4.9% (7) | 7.7% (11) | 21.0% (30) | 41.3% (59) | 25.2% (36) | 143 |
| | | | | | answered | 145 |
| | | | | | skipped | 14 |

## 5. Service Delivery

**5. As part of the policing service delivered by PSNI within your PCSP area, consider the following statements which should be ranked on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 = very unimportant and 5 = very important:**

| | 1 = Very unimportant | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 = Very important | Response Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| that PSNI are always visible | 2.1% (3) | 7.8% (11) | 15.6% (22) | 29.8% (42) | 44.7% (63) | 141 |
| that the local community feels a sense of ownership over local policing matters | 2.8% (4) | 7.8% (11) | 18.4% (26) | 31.9% (45) | 39.0% (55) | 141 |
| that slower response times are acceptable for low-priority incidents | 4.3% (6) | 12.8% (18) | 44.0% (62) | 24.8% (35) | 14.2% (20) | 141 |
| that PSNI response times are currently adequate when called in an emergency | 4.3% (6) | 8.5% (12) | 24.1% (34) | 25.5% (36) | 37.6% (53) | 141 |
| that policing resources are delivered strictly on the basis of need and priority, even if that runs contrary to local perceptions of policing need | 2.8% (4) | 7.1% (10) | 25.5% (36) | 40.4% (57) | 24.1% (34) | 141 |
| that PSNI recognise the contributions of community-based organisations and bodies to policing | 5.7% (8) | 3.5% (5) | 13.5% (19) | 31.9% (45) | 45.4% (64) | 141 |
| | | | | | answered | 141 |
| | | | | | skipped | 18 |

## 6. Politics and Security Considerations

**6. Considering the relationship between politics and policing, along with ongoing issues about the security situation in your PCSP area, the following issues should be ranked on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 = little influence and 5 = a lot of influence:**

| | 1 = Little influence | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 = A lot of influence | Response Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| The extent to which political opinion influences confidence in the PSNI at a local level | 3.7% (5) | 14.0% (19) | 25.7% (35) | 27.9% (38) | 28.7% (39) | 136 |
| The extent to which political opinion influences confidence in the PSNI at a national level | 2.9% (4) | 8.1% (11) | 22.1% (30) | 30.9% (42) | 36.0% (49) | 136 |
| The extent to which paramilitary activity influences confidence in PSNI at a local level | 8.8% (12) | 13.2% (18) | 22.8% (31) | 25.0% (34) | 30.1% (41) | 136 |
| The extent to which paramilitary activity influences confidence in PSNI at a national level | 5.9% (8) | 11.8% (16) | 23.5% (32) | 25.0% (34) | 33.8% (46) | 136 |
| The extent to which organised crime influences confidence in PSNI at a local level | 6.6% (9) | 9.5% (13) | 19.7% (27) | 31.4% (43) | 32.8% (45) | 137 |
| The extent to which organised crime influences confidence in PSNI at a national level | 6.6% (9) | 6.6% (9) | 23.5% (32) | 31.6% (43) | 31.6% (43) | 136 |
| The extent to which public disorder influences confidence in PSNI in terms of parades | 5.9% (8) | 8.1% (11) | 12.5% (17) | 27.2% (37) | 46.3% (63) | 136 |
| The extent to which public disorder influences confidence in PSNI in terms of flags | 6.6% (9) | 5.1% (7) | 14.0% (19) | 30.9% (42) | 43.4% (59) | 136 |
| The extent to which PSNI are open about security constraints on the delivery of day-to-day policing influences confidence | 3.7% (5) | 2.9% (4) | 22.1% (30) | 38.2% (52) | 33.1% (45) | 136 |
| | | | | | answered | 137 |
| | | | | | skipped | 22 |

## 7. Demographics

**7. What PCSP/DPCSP are you a Manager/Member of? Please tick all that apply**

| | | | Response Percent | Response Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Antrim | | 3.05% | 4 |
| 2 | Ards | | 4.58% | 6 |
| 3 | Armagh | | 3.82% | 5 |
| 4 | Ballymena | | 1.53% | 2 |
| 5 | Ballymoney | | 3.82% | 5 |
| 6 | Banbridge | | 3.05% | 4 |
| 7 | Belfast | | 5.34% | 7 |
| 8 | Carrickfergus | | 2.29% | 3 |
| 9 | Castlereagh | | 4.58% | 6 |
| 10 | Coleraine | | 6.87% | 9 |
| 11 | Cookstown | | 3.05% | 4 |
| 12 | Craigavon | | 3.05% | 4 |
| 13 | Derry | | 6.11% | 8 |
| 14 | Down | | 4.58% | 6 |
| 15 | Dungannon & South Tyrone | | 3.82% | 5 |
| 16 | Fermanagh | | 6.11% | 8 |
| 17 | Larne | | 1.53% | 2 |
| 18 | Limavady | | 5.34% | 7 |
| 19 | Lisburn | | 1.53% | 2 |
| 20 | Magherafelt | | 5.34% | 7 |
| 21 | Moyle | | 4.58% | 6 |
| 22 | Newry & Mourne | | 3.82% | 5 |
| 23 | Newtownabbey | | 5.34% | 7 |
| 24 | North Down | | 4.58% | 6 |
| 25 | Omagh | | 2.29% | 3 |
| 26 | Strabane | | 3.82% | 5 |
| 27 | North Belfast DPCSP | | 1.53% | 2 |
| 28 | South Belfast DPCSP | | 0.76% | 1 |
| 29 | East Belfast DPCSP | | 0.00% | 0 |
| 30 | West Belfast DPCSP | | 0.00% | 0 |
| | | | answered | 131 |
| | | | skipped | 28 |

## 8. Length of time served on PCSP (including DPP position)

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **1** | | 3 |
| **2** | | 2 YEARS |
| **3** | | Two years. |
| **4** | | 10 years |
| **5** | | 20 months |
| **6** | | 1 month |
| **7** | | 1 year |
| **8** | | 3 years |
| **9** | | 1 year |
| **10** | | PCSP Staff member 2 years |
| **11** | | 1 year |
| **12** | | 18 months |
| **13** | | 5yrs |
| **14** | | 2 years |
| **15** | | 10 years |
| **16** | | 5 yrs |
| **17** | | Two years |
| **18** | | One year |
| **19** | | 10 |
| **20** | | Since the start of the current PCSP structure |
| **21** | | 2yrs Independent member |
| **22** | | Five yrs. |
| **23** | | From the start off DPP |
| **24** | | 4 months |
| **25** | | !8 months |
| **26** | | 2 years |
| **27** | | Eight year |
| **28** | | PCSP since constituted |
| **29** | | 2 years independent vice chair |
| **30** | | 1 year |
| **31** | | 2 1/2 years |
| **32** | | 2 years. |
| **33** | | 11years |
| **34** | | five years |
| **35** | | Two years. |
| **36** | | One year |
| **37** | | 2yrs |

## 8. Length of time served on PCSP (including DPP position)

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **38** | | 6 years |
| **39** | | 3 years |
| **40** | | 6 years |
| **41** | | Since inception of DPP. |
| **42** | | from DPP days and right through PCSP days until present.. |
| **43** | | 2 years 8 months |
| **44** | | 2 years |
| **45** | | On and off 5 years |
| **46** | | 2 months |
| **47** | | in 2nd year |
| **48** | | About 1 and a half to 2 years |
| **49** | | 1 year |
| **50** | | 5 years |
| **51** | | from beginning |
| **52** | | 10 years |
| **53** | | 3 years |
| **54** | | 6 years |
| **55** | | 11 years |
| **56** | | 2 months |
| **57** | | 1.5 yrs |
| **58** | | 3years |
| **59** | | Since the very beginning |
| **60** | | 2 years |
| **61** | | 1 year |
| **62** | | two years |
| **63** | | From the beginning of D.P.P and on P.C.S.P. |
| **64** | | 2years |
| **65** | | Six years |
| **66** | | 2 years |
| **67** | | Less than 1 year |
| **68** | | 11 years |
| **69** | | 18 months on pcsp |
| **70** | | 1 year |
| **71** | | 2 years |
| **72** | | 7 years |
| **73** | | 2 years |
| **74** | | 1 yr |

## 8. Length of time served on PCSP (including DPP position)

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **75** | | 2 years |
| **76** | | 2 years |
| **77** | | 8 years I would point out that by providing these details I have in effect waived my right to anonymity; you might as well ask us our names. |
| **78** | | 7 years |
| **79** | | 1 Year |
| **80** | | <1 year |
| **81** | | 2 yrs |
| **82** | | 2 months |
| **83** | | 2 years |
| **84** | | 11 years |
| **85** | | 3 years |
| **86** | | 1 year 9 months |
| **87** | | 5yrs |
| **88** | | 1 year |
| **89** | | Approx 10 years (no comment box??) |
| **90** | | two years |
| **91** | | 6 years |
| **92** | | 1 year |
| **93** | | 4 ---Years |
| **94** | | 2 years |
| **95** | | seven years |
| **96** | | 8 |
| **97** | | 6years |
| **98** | | 3 years |
| **99** | | 10 years |
| **100** | | 2 years |
| **101** | | 2 Years |
| **102** | | 6 years |
| **103** | | 2 years |
| **104** | | Just over One year |
| **105** | | 12 months |
| **106** | | 2 years |
| **107** | | 2 years |
| **108** | | 4 years |
| **109** | | 4 years |
| **110** | | 5 years |
| **111** | | 5th year |

## 8. Length of time served on PCSP (including DPP position)

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **112** | | 1.5 yrs |
| **113** | | 2 years |
| **114** | | 2 years |
| **115** | | 2 Years |
| **116** | | 2years |
| **117** | | 3 months for myself although as an organisation we have been attending for years. |
| **118** | | 5 years |

| | |
|---|---|
| answered | 118 |
| skipped | 41 |

*Appendix 2*

## 5.2 Breakdown of Survey Responses by Socio-demographic Variable

### Returns by Political / Independent Status:

| 9. Status | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | Response Percent | Response Total |
| 1 | Political Member | | 30.33% | 37 |
| 2 | Independent Member | | 69.67% | 85 |
| | | | answered | 122 |
| | | | skipped | 37 |

### Returns by Employment Status:

| 10. Employment status | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | Response Percent | Response Total |
| 1 | Unemployed | | 3.97% | 5 |
| 2 | Employed | | 73.81% | 93 |
| 3 | Retired | | 21.43% | 27 |
| 4 | Student | | 0.79% | 1 |
| | | | answered | 126 |
| | | | skipped | 33 |

### Returns by Gender:

| 10. Gender | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | Response Percent | Response Total |
| 1 | Male | | 61.72% | 79 |
| 2 | Female | | 37.50% | 48 |
| 3 | Transgendered | | 0.78% | 1 |
| | | | answered | 128 |
| | | | skipped | 31 |

## Returns by Age:

| 11. Age | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | Response Percent | Response Total |
| 1 | 16-24 | | 0.78% | 1 |
| 2 | 25-40 | | 10.16% | 13 |
| 3 | 41-60 | | 61.72% | 79 |
| 4 | 61+ | | 27.34% | 35 |
| | | | answered | 128 |
| | | | skipped | 31 |

## Returns by Community Background:

| 13. Community Background | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | Response Percent | Response Total |
| 1 | Protestant | | 50.40% | 63 |
| 2 | Roman Catholic | | 37.60% | 47 |
| 3 | Other | | 4.00% | 5 |
| 4 | None | | 8.00% | 10 |
| | | | answered | 125 |
| | | | skipped | 34 |

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